James Coffee House Feb. the 22. 1745/6

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Power and Patriotism:

A POETICAL

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EPISTLE,

Humbly inscribed

TO

The Right Honourable *H.P.* Esq;

To which an INTRODUCTION is prefixed, shewing the Occasion.

Nullus est Casus pro dignitate & libertate Patriæ, non ferendus.
CICER.

Sed tuus hoc populus sapiens ac justus in uno,
Te nostris ducibus, te Graiis anteferendo. HORAT.

Of antient Race by Birth, but nobler yet
In his own WORTH, and without TITLE great. DRYDEN.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT may be juſtly eſteemed a great Weakneſs in the Moderns, that they carry their Admiration of the Antients ſo high, as to conſider every little Incident in their Hiſtories, as infinitely more ſtriking, and of much greater Importance, than any that fall out in their own Times, in which moſt certainly they very often injure themſelves as well as the Truth. They injure themſelves, by ſuppoſing that there was a ſuperior Degree of Senſe and Virtue viſible in thoſe Ages, to what we are ever to expect to ſee in ours, by which they damp that Heroick Fire, ſo neceſſary to all great Actions, and ſo do their utmoſt to produce that Effect, which by a blind and ill-grounded Prepoſſeſſion, they fancy produced already, by Cauſes, which neither have been, or can be aſſigned. They injure Truth, by ſuffering their Fancy, like a Teleſcope unskilfully uſed, to leſſen thoſe Objects that are near them, as well as to magnify ſuch as are at a Diſtance, tho' equal in themſelves.

WE pique ourſelves, for Inſtance, upon underſtanding perfectly the Means by which *Piſiſtratus* raiſed himſelf to the Principality of *Athens*, by collecting them from a Multitude of Hiſtorians, at the ſame Time that we neglect a great Number of late Tranſactions, equally ſurprizing in every Reſpect, and much more inſtructive in their Conſequences. The Sedition of the *Gracchi* has employed Abundance of modern Pens, and yet one may with great Veracity venture to affirm, that there are very few States in *Europe*, in which Events of a like Nature, and as remarkable to the full, have not happened, more than once in the laſt fifty Years. But we are ſo infatuated with that Admiration caught at School, that, in this Reſpect, we continue Children as long as we live.

I HAVE

I HAVE often thought, and I believe I ſhall never ſee Cauſe to change my Opinion, that it would be a Thing of great Conſequence, if our Youth ſtudied the Hiſtory of our own Nation, with the ſame Application that they do the Hiſtories of *Greece* and *Rome*. To neglect *theſe* would be certainly a Fault, but to neglect *that*, is poſſibly the greater Fault of the two It was the Judgment of Mr *Hobbes*, who has been always eſteemed a Man of ſtrong Underſtanding, that our laſt Civil War was in a great Meaſure owing to our great Men's ſtudying *Greek* and *Latin* Writers, and endeavouring to introduce the Maxims inculcated by them, into the Management of our Affairs, without duly conſidering the Difference between the Nations, and their Civil Conſtitutions. This Obſervation of his hath been frequently copied and commended, but I doubt very much, whether it has yet been ſufficiently carried into Practice.

WHOEVER reads our Hiſtory attentively will ſee, that almoſt all our great Stateſmen, have either blindly addicted themſelves to the Service of the Crown, or given themſelves up to that Sort of Popularity, which abſolutely withdrew them from it's Service; and hence it has proceeded, that inſtead of being Authors of Safety and Felicity, they have been the Inſtruments of Trouble and Danger, nay and ſometimes of Deſtruction, both to their Country and themſelves. Yet nothing is clearer, than that the only Way to promote the Good of this Nation, is to follow the Rule of the Conſtitution, and never to divide the Intereſt of the Prince from that of the People.

THE famous Earl of *Strafford*, whom I make no Scruple of aſſerting to have been, in Point of Abilities, equal to any Man of his Rank celebrated by the Antients, deviated into both theſe Errors, notwithſtanding all that good Senſe and deep Penetration with which he was endowed. While a private Gentleman, he puſhed the

Power

Power of the House of Commons with the greatest Heat possible, and yet after he became a Minister, he does not seem to have remembered, how far the Power of that House had been pushed by himself, and consequently might be pushed again. He moved then in a superior Orb, and tho' it can never be denied, that he moved in it with as much Dignity as ever Minister did, yet he fell by neglecting that Remark, obvious enough in itself, and one would imagine, as obvious to him as to any Man that ever lived. The great Earl of *Clarendon*, a Minister of quite another Cast, and who, tho' he was warmly zealous for the Interests of his Master, had nevertheless a sincere Affection for his Country; was undone by despising that Caution so necessary, of cultivating a good Correspondence with those who are the Representatives of the People, and who, if they ought not to be courted, at least ought not to be neglected. His Successor, the Earl of *Danby*, knew this perfectly, and therefore to secure himself from the like Fate, he had recourse (if the Stories of those Times do not mislead us) to a Sort of Influence, less honourable than the Negligence of his Predecessor, which though it did not absolutely protect him from Misfortunes, yet served however to lessen them in a very great Degree, especially if we consider the Violence of the Times in which he lived, and the Opportunities taken against him by his Enemies.

To carry one's Considerations lower upon this Subject is certainly a very delicate Point, and therefore I shall content myself with observing, that whatever some hasty and heedless People may have thrown out, Experience has shewn, that since Ministers came to have a due Conception of the Power of the Commons as well as the Crown, this Nation has been much more happy. I mean by this, that our Liberty has been more extended, our Properties better secured, our Trade daily increased, and yet the

Power of the Crown, when employed as it ought always to be, for the Good of it's Subjects, has been ſo far from ſuffering Diminution, that it has been found, that longer, more expenſive, and more important Wars have been carried on within this Period, than at any Time before it. For how neceſſary ſoever it may be in arbitrary Governments, to keep the *Arcana Imperii* in the greateſt Obſcurity; yet Experience ſhews, that in free States, the more the Publick is entruſted with it's own Concerns, the better they go on, and the more vigorouſly they are proſecuted.

We hear ſometimes, however, a Kind of repining after what is ſtiled our Old Government, which, put into plain Engliſh, is little better than our Conſtitution miſunderſtood; for I make no Scruple of owning, that I look upon *Magna Charta*, as a rude Draught only of the Liberties we enjoy, That famous Charter intended that the Barons ſhould be free, and though the Barons were numerous in thoſe Days, yet certainly the Spirit of that Charter is much more diffuſed in ours, when the People in general are as free, and perhaps more ſo, than the Barons were deſigned thereby, and have their Freedom put on a Baſis much more ſolid.

It was reſerved for our Times to ſee, that the greateſt Struggles for Power may be carried on, without any of thoſe Violences, and without producing any of thoſe Miſchiefs, which deform our antient Chronicles, and which are not abſolutely effaced in the Stories of later Times, as appears particularly by the famous Struggle between the *Cecils* and the Earl of *Eſſex*, which ended in the ſhedding that Nobleman's Blood, for what was rather an Act of Indiſcretion than Treaſon; but Thanks be to God, our Government has undergone ſo ſalutary a Change, that thoſe who wiſh well both to the Crown and their Country, cannot want the Power of ſerving both, without coming to

any

any ſuch Extremities. It is now extreamly practicable to conciliate, what, in our Old Conſtitution, appeared Contraries, *viz.* Attachment to the Crown, and the ſtrongeſt Zeal imaginable for the Intereſt of the People. Under that Conſtitution, an enterpriziug Miniſter made Nothing of diſſolving a Parliament, and forcing the Machine of Government, to keep going on for ſix or ſeven Years together, or perhaps longer; under this Conſtitution, ſuch a Meaſure (as it ought to be) is impracticable. By this it plainly appears, that whatever ſplenetick Men (often too againſt their own Judgments) may aſſert, we are at this Juncture, in the ſtricteſt Senſe of the Word, a FREE PEOPLE; the Form and Force of our Government depending, at leaſt as much on the *Conſent* of the COMMONS, as on the Will and *Pleaſure* of the CROWN.

A LATE Diſpute, which, however *briſk*, has ended very *happily*, has ſhewn our Conſtitution in the faireſt Light poſſible; it has ſhewn, that the greateſt Power that can be attained in this Iſland, is to be attained by having a due Regard for the Intereſt of the Publick, and that Miniſters who preſerve this, are ſure of being ſafe under ALL Princes, and under a WISE and GOOD Prince, GREAT; it has ſhewn us, that the moſt enterprizing Genius may ſometimes miſtake it's Meaſures, and that what appears extreamly feaſible in the Cabinet, may be abſolutely impracticable elſewhere. It has ſhewn us, that we are in a much better Situation than we ever conceived ourſelves to be; for it has ſhewn us, that ſuch as are the beſt Friends to the People, and the trueſt Judges of the Conſtitution, have the Affairs of the one, and the Conduct of the other in their Hands, where it is our Intereſt to wiſh they might be. In one Word; it has ſhewn us, what perhaps was never ſhewn before, that *true Patriots* may be *able Politicians*, and that our *Politicians* are actually *Patriots*, not in *Name* but in *Fact*.

THIS.

THIS gave Occaſion to the following Verſes, of which I ſhall ſay no more, than that if they are not well wrote, they are well deſigned, and that no Critick will be better pleaſed than their Author, to ſee them excelled on ſo noble a Subject. I ſhall only add, that they were written before, as theſe looſe Thoughts in Proſe were after, the Completion of this great Event.

A POETICAL

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A POETICAL

EPISTLE, &c.

SURE there are *Times* when *Bards* may venture *Praiſe*,
Yet no Suſpicion of their *Candour* raiſe.
When ALL the *Fullneſs* of their *Hearts* may tell,
And own a *Joy* in others *doing well*.
Hard were it elſe for VIRTUE to be *known*,
If *unapplauded* when in *Publick* ſhown.
And ſcarce, we *future* PATRIOTS could expect,
If thoſe We *have*, We *meanly* ſhould *neglect*.
Silent behold them, *ſtruggling* in our *Cauſe*,
Warm for our *Freedom*, zealous for the *Laws*.

Intent on *all Things* fit for our *Defence*,
And proud to *ſave* US at THEIR OWN Expence.

IN Realms *deſpotic*, if ſome artful *Prieſt*
Arrives at *Greatneſs*, he's by All careſt.
The *Financier*, who thrives at *publick Coſt*,
When moſt he *fleeces*, is *extoll'd* the moſt.
And the *proud Soldier* dy'd with *human Gore*,
The more his *Murders*, his *Applauſe* the more.
What *Madneſs* this! what *Ignorance* in Choice!
Does *Fury* guide the frantick *Peoples* Voice?
Or ſunk to *Fools* beneath the Yoke of *Knaves*,
Are they in *earneſt* pleas'd with being *Slaves*?
Whate'er it be,------ their *Folly* muſt be great
Who thus *adore* the Men they ought to *hate*.

BUT bleſs'd with *Senſe*, bleſs'd with the *Right* to uſe,
In Lands of *Freedom*, nobler *Themes* we chuſe.
Nor *Greatneſs* for itſelf alone *revere*,
Unapt to *love* what muſt excite our *Fear*.

Rather

Rather *averſe*, and with miſ-judging *Hate*
Preſuming *Ill* of ſuch as dare be *Great*.
Diſtruſting *Eloquence*, afraid of *Power*.
So far from *flat'ring*, that we ſcarce *endure*,
Thoſe who muſt *rule*; and tho' the *Gainers* We,
Yet with *Concern*, We this *Diſtinction* ſee.
But if a diff'rent *Path* we e'er purſue,
Conviction drives us, ſtill our *Judgment* true;
Good are the *Great*, the *Multitude* approve,
Sure Sign of *Merit*------a FREE-PEOPLE'S Love.

YET *better* ſtill, if *Thoſe* who guide the *State*,
Will only upon *Patriot Terms* be *Great*.
If for their *Country* careful they ſuſtain,
The *Load* of *Government*, it's *Pomp* diſdain;
If only for the *Publick Good* they toil,
And neither *They*, nor thoſe *beneath them* ſpoil;
In Grandeur *modeſt*, upright each in *Place*,
Diſcharg'd with Juſtice, Dignity, and Grace;

Prompt

Prompt to *reward*, tho' ſlow to take *Offence*,
And always *heedful* of the PUBLICK SENSE.
Such *Rulers* never can *Reluctance* find,
To *all* they *ask*, the People are *inclin'd*.
Taught by the *Bleſſings* of ſo *mild* a Sway,
Well pleas'd they *ſerve*, and chearfully *obey*.
Content in all Things, they no *Toils* regard,
No *Taxes* gaul them, and no *Times* ſeem *hard*.

If *farther* yet they go ------ new *Trials* ſtand,
When *dark* Intrigues induce ſome *harſh* Demand;
If then conducted by fair VIRTUE's Light,
They chuſe to quit their *Power* to follow *Right*.
With decent *Duty* ſupplicate the *Throne*,
And for the *Publick Intereſts* ſlight their *own*.
What *Trophies* ſhan't We to ſuch PATRIOTS raiſe!
Within what *Bounds* ſhall we contain our *Praiſe*?

In Times like theſe ------ when *Truth* and *Praiſe* agree,
And grateful *Nations* all their *Duty* ſee.

When

When ev'ry Tongue proclaims the PATRIOT Name,
When *Millions* witneſs his juſt *Right* to *Fame.*
When *Infants* aiming at the Power of *Speech,*
Are taught by *Parents* fav'rite *Sounds* to reach.
When feeble *Dotards* own their *vig'rous Age,*
Saw no ſuch VIRTUE grace the *Publick Stage.*
When Ages, Sexes, Ranks, Diſtinction ſcorn,
And PUBLICK WORTH on PUBLICK VOICE is born.
When in a gen'ral VOTE the PEOPLE join,
To ſtamp th' *immortal Mark* --- as now --- on THINE.

POETS may ſure ſuch *glorious Deeds* rehearſe,
Nor fear an *Imputation* on their *Verſe.*
Nay 'tis their Duty then ----- to raiſe the Song,
That VIRTUES rare like theſe they may *prolong.*
To *diſtant* Times make all their Beauties *known,*
Thoſe t' *inflame* and *celebrate* their OWN.

How much miſtaken have our *Sat'riſts* been,
How much in *Manners* and in *Men* o'erſeen

Ev'n *POPE* himſelf, *APOLLO*'s fav'rite *Bard*,
(To whom no *future Wit* ſhall be compar'd)
In this too *err'd* ---- He thought that *Place* and *Power*
Muſt Conſcience *ſtifle*, Honeſty *obſcure*.
That Stateſmen knew no *Guides* ---- but *private Views*,
That Int'reſts *Dictates* they could ne'er *refuſe*.
That *Pleaſure*, *Power*, *Revenge*, or *Party-Rage*,
Did *all* Mankind ---- but *moſt* the *Great* engage.
And that *Self-Love* for *Social* to poſtpone,
Was a *Greek* Virtue to this *Clime* unknown.

BUT though his *tuneful Muſe* the World miſled,
To ſlight the *Living*, idolize the *Dead*.
To think of *Greece* and *Rome* with aweful Fear,
And fancy none but *Knaves* and *Fools* born here.
Yet YOU, Great Sir, --- YOU, ---and your *noble Friends*,
Have made your *Country* and your *Age* amends.
Taught us that *Patriot Virtue* ſtill ſurvives,
And in bleak *Britain* as in *Athens* thrives,

NAY

NAY to *their* Stories, *Your's* gives *Credit* now,
And forc'd by *Facts* even our *Free-Thinkers* bow.
They now believe that ARISTIDES wrote
Against *Himself* — from *Principle* — the *Vote*.
That dying PHOCION bless'd th' *ungrateful State*,
Which paid his *Labours* with such barb'rous *Hate*.
That SCIPIO's *Exile* was a nobler Scene,
Than all his glorious *Victories* had been.
And SYLLA's quitting *Dictatorial Power*,
A full *Amends* for all he did *before*.
Nay more than this with ready *Credence* meets,
And without *Sneer* the *Pedant* now repeats,
How CODRUS in Disguise stole forth to *bleed*,
And CURTIUS to the *Gulph* provok'd his *Steed*.
With all the *Legend* of advent'rous Knights,
Of whom the *Poet* sings, or the *Historian* writes.

THESE fit for *Schools* — before — *Wise Heads* confess'd,
Some *Truth* at Bottom — *Fable* — all the rest.

Yet

Yet well designed — to give *old Bards* — their Due,
And *finely told* — and ev'ry Thing — but *true*.
For why said they should NATURE, *Mankind* change,
Why in those Ages all her *Worthies* range;
And leave us *none* in later Times to shew
What *finer Clay* she wrought with long ago?

ANSWER'D they are — "Behold yon PATRIOT BAND,
" See in *what Numbers* — Men *superior* stand.
" Mark their *high Birth* — their *higher* Worth explore,
" And own — to *Britain* — *Greece* and *Rome* were poor.
" *Once* in an Age some *mighty Chief* they saw,
" *Bards* and *Historians* took a Pride to draw.
" More than them ALL — our AGE — our CLIME has *bred*,
" A *Host* of HEROES — owning YOU — their HEAD.

FINIS.